

This record is a partial extract of the original cable. The full text of the original cable is not available.

UNCLAS E F T O SECTION 01 OF 02 NEW DELHI 000074

SIPDIS

NOFORN  
SENSITIVE

USDA/FAS/FAA/CALEXANDER/MCONLON

E.O. 12958: DECL: 01/03/2015

TAGS: [PREL](#) [CASC](#) [AEMR](#) [EAID](#) [MASS](#) [SOCI](#) [EAGR](#) [ID](#) [CE](#) [MV](#) [IN](#)

SUBJECT: INDIA TSUNAMI SITREP: JANUARY 4

REF: NEW DELHI 38

Classified By: DCM Robert O. Blake, Jr. Reasons 1.4 (B,D).

1. (SBU) Summary: India Consular officers have been focusing on unaccounted for American citizens through an ongoing effort to respond to inquiries, and have been successful in resolving about 170 cases. In a January 4 session with members of the local media, the Ambassador highlighted the US relief effort, and US-India cooperation during the disaster. The USAID/DART team has determined that the situation in India has become less of an immediate emergency. GOI military assistance for Sri Lanka has reached a considerable level and has now moved beyond short-term relief. The Ministry of Home Affairs acknowledged on January 3 that the number of Indian deaths is likely to grow with the addition of thousands of individuals currently counted as missing in the Andaman and Nicobar Islands. End Summary.

#### Consular Crunches the Numbers

2. (U) The consular section continues to search for unaccounted for American citizens in India where specific information is available. Through a coordinated effort involving the Embassy and the three consulates, calls were made on January 3 and the morning of January 4 to persons in the US who had previously inquired about their loved ones in India. As a result of this effort, the Mission resolved about 170 cases, bringing the number of open cases under 400. Consular India will repeat the effort tonight, and hopes to achieve similar results.

#### Ambassador's Press Conference

3. (U) In a January 4 meeting with foreign affairs correspondents and editors, the Ambassador highlighted the immediate US response to the tsunami disaster and noted that the improved US-India relationship was evident in our coordinated relief effort. The Ambassador appreciated New Delhi's lead role in foreign assistance for Sri Lanka and the broad scope of that effort. He also explained that operational effectiveness based on need is one of the key criteria in allocating the USD 350 million that the USG has committed. In response to several questions on a tsunami early warning system, the Ambassador emphasized the need for Washington and New Delhi to cooperate on developing one that meets India's needs.

#### USAID

4. (U) USAID/DART India reports that as of January 4, the situation in the state of Tamil Nadu seems to be moving beyond the immediate emergency phase. GOI and NGO efforts to provide life-saving water, sanitation, food, and shelter are underway. USAID/DART is continuing assessments of needs in Tamil Nadu and has been receiving reports from ConGen Calcutta's FSN who is in the Andaman and Nicobar Islands.

#### India in Sri Lanka

5. (SBU//NOFORN) Indian relief efforts in Sri Lanka have been underway since the day of the tsunami. The GOI has conducted the initial search and rescue, carried out recovery operations in difficult areas, ferried relief supplies, and continues to work directly with the GOSL to put help where it is needed most. Six Indian ships, eight helicopters and numerous strategic air assets are working around the clock, and Indian pilots are flying 18-20 hours a day. The Indian Navy survey ship at Galle took soundings after the tsunami and their divers and engineers have already restored two of three berths. They will help the Sri Lankan Navy get all berths in Galle open. The field hospital set up by the GOI in the east has reportedly treated 1300 patients, 500 or more of which were children, and medical teams are established in various provinces providing care on the spot.

6. (SBU//NOFORN) All these assets are being effectively

coordinated from the Indian High Commission in Colombo. The Ambassador and DAO hope to receive authorization to approach the GOI January 5 with a formal proposal for attaching an Indian coordinating element to US forces in the Bay of Bengal region.

#### Indian Casualty Numbers

-----

17. (U) The most recent Ministry of Home Affairs (MHA) update indicated that on January 3, the total number of Indian deaths was 9,479 compared to 9,451 the day before. The MHA also reported that the figure was likely to increase pending "confirmation regarding 5,681 missing/feared dead (as per the preliminary survey) in the Nicobar Group of Islands." According to that report, the total figure for missing persons India-wide was 5,796.  
MULFORD